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ABSTRACT

The University Extension Department in Botswana would operate in the field of adult education. Adult studies would be programs of relevant educational courses in the evenings, on a day-release basis, on weekends, and, for short periods, residentially. Training would cover both the Credit Union work now being carried cut in Lesotho and Swaziland, as well as training in methods of adult education; university and other appropriate staff would be secured to train working people--normally in government--to be more effective in their jobs. These activities would use face-to-face teaching methods, group-learning methods, and the available mass media. The methods would be applied to the three countries involved (Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland) as and when it would be useful and agreeable to do so. The Botswana School of Adult Learning (SOAL) would operate nationally in Botswana with and through existing organizations. One service the SOAL might offer is local radio broadcasts. It might disseminate information on the existence of conferences. Permanent and temporary personnel would be employed to perform these functions. (CK)

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1. Background

Some measure of University Extension has been in Botswana since the days of Pius XII College at Roma, Lesotho. Its establishment with trained residential staff dates from 1966 when an expatriate assistant Director of the UBLS was appointed to Botswana together with a Motswana field worker.

From 1966 to early 1970 the policy of the Extension Department was to work through pre-designed groups as a basis for the development of a broad adult education programme. The group was the Credit Union or, as it is known in Botswana, the Thrift and Loan Society. This policy is based on the ideas contained in St. Francis Xavier University's extension philosophy - the Antigonish movement. Most of the academic and fieldworkers in the department have been trained at the Coady Institute at St. Francis Xavier University and the skilled ideas that they brought with them have shown considerable success in Lesotho and much promise in Swaziland. In Botswana the development of an adult education movement through a Credit Union base has been slow; so slow as eventually to bring into question the wisdom of such an approach to this sector of development. An answer to the question as to why this should be the case is, essentially, that in Botswana there have been reasoned approaches to externally prepared scheme; and this on two counts. The first is that there has been in this period a growing, capable cooperative moveme t in the country which has been professionally interested in the Credit Union Movement; while simultaneously there have been educators and planners in authority who have felt that they know what sort of adult education movement they feel to be relevant to the developing culture and the practical needs of Botswana - a different movement from that which existed.

The result of this conflict has been that the School has cordially agreed, with the new, properly founded, Co-operative Development Centre, to phase out of the primary Co-operative development field. And in doing so the School has gained the relative freedom to operate in the broader field of adult education which lies almost untouched in Botswana.

It should be noted that this change in the policy of the UBLS adult eudcation unit in Botswana is in agreement with the policy contained in the aims of UBLS School of Adult Learning which replaced the

Extension Department early in 1970. Briefly stated, the intention in the change of title was a change of style and orientation which, while recognising the Credit Union field as an important area of adult education, required that the School look at its functions in the broader field of Adult Education under the general headings of:

Social Development
Adult Studies
and Training

Social Development refers to such schemes as the Roma Valley Development and Low Cost Housing Co-operatives as are now under way in Lesotho.

Adult Studies would be programmes of relevant educational courses in the evenings, on a day-release basis, at weekends and, for short periods, residentially. Training would cover both the Credit Union work now being carried out in Lesotho and Swaziland as well as training in methods of Adult Education and the securing of University and other appropriate staff to train working people - normally in Government - to be more effective in their jobs.

All these requirements, it was agreed, should use face-to-face teaching methods, group-learning methods and the available mass media, as appropriate. And it was also agreed that these headings should be applied to the three countires as and when it would be useful and agreeable to do so. This agreement implies the development of three individual tailored University adult education programmes for the three countries represented in the UBLS. Following a survey of the field of Adult Education in Botswana it was felt that the following particular guidelines should be borne in mind when drafting the UBLS SOAL plan of operations there.

A. The School should know, recognize and respect the character and culture of Botswana.

B. The plan should be for a national programme which should attempt to offer the servies of the SOAL to as many of the people of Botswana as possible - often where they live.

C. In its work in Botswana the School should generally attempt to work with and through already existing organisations of government, and para-statal areas and among voluntary agencies, rather than always create new organisations of its own.

2. A Movement of Adult Education in Botswana

It has already been stated that the SOAL should operate nationally in Botswana, running relevant programmes of adult education with and through existing organisations. The suggestion is made that there would be great value in creating a co-ordinated movement of adult education in the country wherein could be inculcated a vigorous acceptance of the fact that adults can learn and that their learning new facts and ideas can positively affect the development process long before their children - those of them who have the opportunity - have been educated through the formal schooling system. Such a movement could be based in a nationally registered organisation like the Ghana Peoples Educational Association or the young movement of adult education associations in Tanzania. The essentials of such a movement for Botswana are that there should be a central headquarters group that could offer assistance, materials and advice to locally-run branches. The local branches would create their own programmes of adult education which would be designed to be locally-relevant. Such branches could be already existing organisations like the Botswana Council of Women branches which would retain their identity but might choose to affiliate themselves to the national adult ~~educational~~ service-organisation. Or they might be local groups which come together solely for the purposes of adult education.

The movement would not belong to the School of Adult Learning but might expect assistance and advice from the School's staff. Such assistance might come in the form of training seminars for branch committees, the preparation of study guides for particular courses, programmes broadcast over the radio, a newsletter for members of the movement and the organisation of periodic conferences at which problems common to the branches and to the movement in general might be discussed.

In time it should be the aim of such a movement to employ its own headquarters staff. But in the early years, it would be a proper function of the School of Adult Learning ~~to give~~ considerable staff time to it.

3. Radio and Adult Education

It has been mentioned above that one service that the SOAL might offer to local adult education groups might be programmes broadcast to them over the radio. Such broadcasts could occasion the formation of local groups and enhance the movement; certainly radio offers the

one opportunity that exists in Botswana, for simultaneous mass education. It is suggested that the SOAL's involvement in Adult Education by Radio might take the following forms:

a. Programmes Designed for Radio Learning Groups

These programmes would be designed for and broadcast to selected groups of adults in different parts of the country. Each group would have a leader trained in discussion techniques and group leadership. It would be his task to get the group to meet at the programme time and see that the radio, with strong batteries, is at the group's meeting-place. Following the broadcast he would lead the group in discussing the subject matter of the programme and might then write down the groups replies to prepared discussion questions and send them to the broadcaster.

The SOAL would prepare discussion materials and questions for group leaders, would prepare the programmes and would evaluate the whole scheme. These programmes lend themselves particularly well to such tasks as dissemination of information about the country's development plan.

b. A Dramatized Radio-Serial Programme

The B.B.C. 'Archers' serial has now been running for about 25 years. Originally it was designed to help raise the morale of the farming community in Britain during the difficult post-war years, and to raise the productivity of the farms. It is said that the 'Archers', which became very popular in Britain, made a dramatic contribution to the upsurge of agricultural production there. A similar programme was begun in Botswana in 1969 but was discontinued. It is proposed that the SOAL attempts, with other interested bodies, to discover the reasons for the failure of the first serial, and then establishes such a programme, properly prepared on a regular basis.

c. A University Programme

It would be particularly appropriate for the SOAL to assist the University in showing itself to the people of Botswana at the time of devolution and, thereafter, on a regular basis. Such a programme could cover interviews, reports, actuality recordings etc.

d. Training and Research

i. It is suggested that the School assists interested organisations in Botswana in the training of full or part-time scriptwriters, programme-planners etc., and in a small country, where the scriptwriter might have to function as recorder and broadcaster as well there should also be training in these tasks.

ii. Since there has been no effective listener--research carried out in Botswana it is suggested that the School of Adult Learning arranges to carry out a measure of research in this field.

4. Training working people to be more effective at their jobs

One of the classical functions of University adult education departments elsewhere is the organisation of educational and trainig courses for which expert staff are secured, normally on a part-time basis, sometimes from within the internal departments of the University. Presently, in Botswana, a number of UBLS staff members representing varied academic disciplines will be resident and available for a measure of extra-mural work. It should then be possible to offer training facilities to such organisations as Police, Prisons and Councils for both staff and councillors.

5. Training in Methods of Adult Education

It may be that the School of Adult Learning will choose, in time to develop a residential University Diploma Course in Adult Education. This course would be attended mainly by relatively senior government officials and workers in voluntary agencies whose professions require a good understanding of what is involved in teaching adults and how adults learn.

Such a course, if it is to be established, will not happen for sometime to come. But it will be possible for the SOAL in Botswana to offer short courses in this subject to interested parties such as the Extension Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and to health educators, the churches and voluntary agencies.

6. Work with the Botswana Society

The Botswana Society, recently established, has already published two numbers of Botswana Notes and Records and has shown itself to be a reputable society of learning. It is obviously in the

mutual interests of the Society and the UBLS that there should be close association between t h e m. To this end it is suggested that the SOAL should work closely with the Botswana Society whenever possible. Following devolution it is expected that UBLS staff members will desire to publish academic articles in Botswana Notes and Records.

Perhaps it is worth noting here that the Society has been a successful voluntary one and intends to remain so. It would not welcome any move to be taken over by a professional organisation. Such is not the intention of the SOAL, of course, and it is hoped that both the Society and the SOAL will benefit mutually from a close relationship while each retains its own identity.

7. The UBLS Conference Unit in Botswana

In the University of Zambia all University Conferences involving outside representation are organised by the Extra-Mural Department. The particular advantage of this arrangement lies in the availability of staff-given adequate notice - who know how to organise such conferences effectively.

It is suggested that in Botswana the School of Adult Learning be requested to perform a similar function for the University and that Government and other bodies might like to take advantage of this facility.

8. Staff

Clearly the foregoing ideas require a measure of capital outlay and provision for increased recurrent expenditure. The present staff of the SOAL in Botswana consists of one Stenographer, one Typist and one Lecturer and one Field Instructor. There is also provision for one Assistant Director.

It is proposed that the staffing question for the SOAL in Botswana be considered in the following terms:

a. Permanent Staff

'Permanent' relates to posts and not necessarily to incumbents at this stage since for some time to come it is expected that academic-level posts will be filled by expatriates as might some find worker posts.

i. If there is to be a national programme of University Adult Education it is not realistic to consider running any such programmes using staff based at Gaborone except through the means of radio. Even radio programmes

will require a measure of follow up in the field. Moreover the special demands made by development centred on Francistown of all development agencies suggest very strongly that the SOAL should have a second base in Francistown staffed by a University employee of lecturer rank, together with the necessary supporting staff.

ii. If there is to be a national movement of adult education supported by the SOAL, there is a need for fieldworkers to assist in the work of affiliated members of a national adult educational organisation.

It is suggested that provision be made in the near future for field workers in the following places:

Gaborone	1	- Working from Mochudi to Ramatlabana and westwards through Molepolole to Kanye.
Palapye	1	- Working westwards to Serowe, Northeast to Selibe Pikwe and to the South east; and Southwards to Mahalapye.
Francistown	1	- Working in the Tate area, north-westwards to Nata and Totome and Southwards to Orapa.
Maung	1	- Working in the Okavango area.
Ghanzi	1	- Working in Ghanzi - Northwards to D'kar, south-westwards through Kalkfontein and Mamuno, down to Nojane and Ukwi.

These fieldworkers are probably not available among Batswana at the moment. It would perhaps be necessary to select suitable applicants and send them abroad for training not necessarily to Europe or America; perhaps to Tanzania or Nigeria or other University training centres for adult educators in Africa. The suggestion is that ideally at the same time that Batswana are sent for training elsewhere, expatriate volunteers should be recruited for these stations for a finite period of two years. These volunteers would be able to do some initial survey work of their areas and could assist in the early stages of work with branches of the national adult educational movement. On the return of the

trained Batswana the volunteers would gradually hand over to the local staff-members during the volunteers second year.

Clearly if there are Batswana workers with appropriate qualifications available now, there will be no need to recruit outsiders. But if outsiders should be required, they will be able to give valuable assistance to the newly-trained local fieldworkers during their first year of work in this field.

b. Temporary Staff

There will be a need for staff in the School in Botswana for particular purposes over finite periods. For instance if the SOAL radio programme is to be carried out it will be necessary to bring in a member for radio work. His function would be to train those who are involved in the production of radio programmes for adults as a part of their jobs; and he would also launch the programmes outlined in the Radio and Adult Education section above. At the end of his term he would leave and would not be replaced since he would leave behind him trained part-time radio staff who would be able to maintain the on-going programmes.

Another example might be that of a Local Government training expert who could be employed for a specific training function and, when it was completed, would leave.

While such arrangements as contained in these two examples would be valuable it is perhaps necessary to note that experience elsewhere shows that temporary appointments for specific purposes of this sort tend to achieve permanency. Great care should be taken to avoid this danger and it can be avoided provided always that the School remains clear as to its objectives.

The School must not become top heavy in staff.

9. A National Co-ordinating Committee for Adult Education in Botswana

While a greater measure of adult education is already happening in Botswana than is generally realised, it is probably true to say that organisations whose work is a part of the broad field of adult education do not always see it as such. It is important that they should do since this recognition would put their own

functions in a more correct perspective than hitherto and it may be that such recognition would assist in minimising jurisdictional conflict in the field. This recognition would have to be organised.

It is suggested that a National Co-ordinating Committee for Adult Education be established whereon the School of Adult Learning would be Secretary. The Committee should have members from all interested Government departments as well as from para-statal and voluntary agencies. Representation should be at a sufficiently high level as to allow a measure of commitment from each organisation represented.

The Committee should be a part of the portfolio of a Government Ministry. Presumably this should be the Ministry of Education although one hesitates to ask Education to burden itself even further. Perhaps one other consideration might be mentioned here and that is that since adult education is an interest of all Government agencies and of most para-statal and voluntary agencies, consideration might be given to the possibility of agencies, consideration might be given to the possibility of establishing the Committee under a more generalised Ministry.

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